

July, 2004

# The Historacle

*The Official newsletter of the  
Talent Historical Society*

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206 East Main Street • P.O. Box 582 • Talent, OR 97540 • 541-512-8838

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## Baseball Exhibit

Baseball enthusiasts are invited to come to THS and see the old cards and other memorabilia in the display case. Baseball cards of local players who made it into the big leagues like Jeremy Guthrie, Steve Bechler, Dean Hartgraves, & Bob Wolcott will be for sale for \$1.00 a piece and the proceeds will go to THS. These were donated by *Baseball Cards Only* an Ashland based on-line baseball card business. (Go to [www.bbonly.com](http://www.bbonly.com) for a complete list of cards) Also on display is a photo panel of ball players and a notebook with pictures of teams from 1877 in the Rogue Valley. Thanks go to Frank Lang, Matt Watson, Richard Alexander, Ralph Hunkins, Anna Baumstark and Dylan Ruediger for loaning the contents of the display case and for helping put the exhibit together.



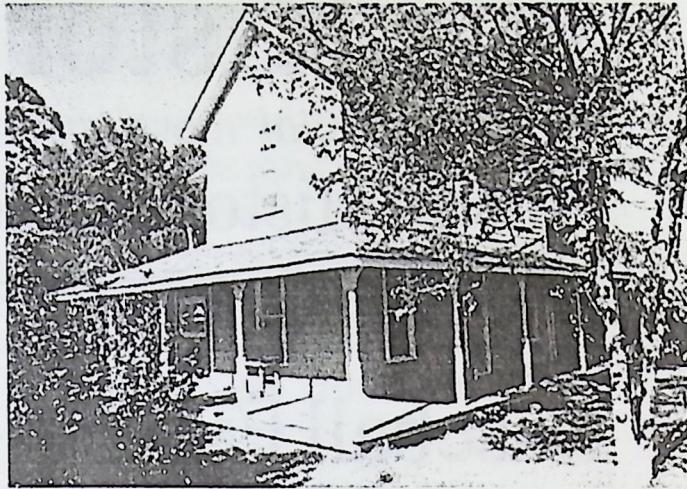
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Talent Baseball team in 1906. J. Garvin was the coach. Pictured also are Wayland Smith, C. Gardner, Bill Glimes, L. Thurber, M. Crawford, E. Vance, and D. Estes and a teacher Mr. Smith.



Parthena and May Smith - former Talent residents. Picture donated by a member of the Historical Society.



Home where the Smith sisters lived at 308 Wagner St. in Talent. Who lives there now now? If you have additional information about the Smith family or the house please contact Talent Historical Society.

The *Historacle* is published quarterly by the  
**Talent Historical Society**

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Talent, OR 97540

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Comments & letters may be sent to the Editor, The *Historacle*, by mail or by email to [casebeer@jeffnet.org](mailto:casebeer@jeffnet.org). Members of the Society receive the *Historacle* free with membership.

# Dunkard Cemetery lies hidden in the Talent area

Many residents of Talent are unaware of the Dunkard Cemetery which lies about a hundred yards off Highway 99 near the north entrance to Talent. In the past, several groups have taken an interest in the cemetery including a Phoenix High School students who took on as his senior project the arduous task of cleaning up the cemetery, cutting off the berry vines and making the cemetery walkable for the first time in years.

Originally, the cemetery lay near the Talent Church of the Brethern or Dunkard Church. The congregation moved years ago to Ashland and sold the church which has since been removed. The term "Dunkard" derives from the sort of baptism the Brethern used.

Family surnames of those who are interred in the Dunkard Cemetery include: Bacon, Brower, Bush, Clevenger, Crawford, Crum, Firestone, Hanscom, Hawkins, Lamb, Mason, Mast, Minear, Mow, Netherland, Nininger, Rhodes, Rodgers, Settlers, Spence, Spitzer and Springer. The records of the church now reside at La Loma University in Southern California but a cemetery record and photographs of the tombstones (taken by Margaret Hunkins) is also kept at THS.

There are 44 graves in the Dunkard cemetery, the oldest of which dates to 1888, and the most recent in 1972.

The grave markers, are of cement, granite, marble, slate and native stone, and a few are made of wood. Though the graveyard is fenced and gated, the gate is not locked. Those who want to view the cemetery, can go just behind and to the left of the Pacific Power sub-station north of Talent.



Grave marker of Clara Eugenie Mast who died Oct 1905 at 5 years of age. She is buried at Dunkard Cemetery . It is unknown who her parents were but they obviously provided a nice headstone for her.

# Jacksonville Construction Unearths City's Two Public Wells

If you have read the local papers, you might know about Oregon Department of Transportation's recent renovation of a mile long stretch of highway through the city of Jacksonville. Chinese artifacts were discovered, but a less advertised find during the removal of the existing asphalt pavement, was a brick and stone well, dug in the 1880s for public use that still contained fourteen feet of water. Sometime later the city workers discovered a twin well on the southwest corner of Third and California Street. It, too, had water in it.

The wells were, and are both located on Third Street, just off California Street. The second well, adjacent to the J'ville Tavern, is a nearly identical in construction to the first. Archeologist Patrick O'Grady said when the first well was found, "It's the prettiest feature we've found. It was the city's drinking well."

As construction progressed, the workers were alerted that the wells might be near by the discovery of a hand pump bolted to the sidewalk adjacent to the site. However, they did not expect to find the

well in as excellent condition as it is, thinking that it would have been filled in during earlier street construction. Old time residents of Jacksonville have come by to tell O'Grady that the well was still being used as late as the 1940s and 1950s.

In the front window of the J'ville Tavern are three old photographs. Two are dated 1900 and 1911 and the southwest well is clearly visible. The third photograph, dated 1947 doesn't show the well.

The well is not going to be placed under asphalt again.

O'Grady and City

Administrator Paul Wyntergreen are working on a plan to keep the well visible as an interpretive, historical artifact. When working on the second well, a single hand carved ivory die (one of a pair of dice) was found. Presumably, it will be used to determine if the second of the wells can also be preserved.



# Talent Community Album

Talent needs a community record. The Historical Society would like to be the catalyst for a new album which documents our lives now and in the past. If you have photos or stories you would like to include in the album please feel free to call or come by and drop off your contributions. Starting in August, the album will be displayed in the Talent Library for viewing. It will start out small but with your help, can become representative of many who have lived or who now live in Talent.

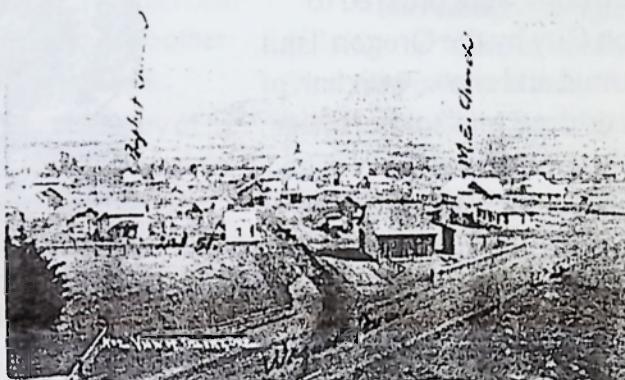
Our mission is to preserve and document the human history of the Talent area. We need young and old alike to tell us what is memorable about our town. The scrapbook will work its way through the decades in pictures and brief stories. Many people have contributed to the photograph files at THS and it is time to get the photos out for the public to see. If you want your Talent home, business, church, cemetery, barn, or school featured in the album, bring in your pictures or stories and I will find a way to include them (nice lazer copies are preferred, you may keep

the originals or donate them to the society).

Old time photos are sought but current ones can be added if you can give justification to do so. Surprise me. Tell me all the things I didn't know about the characters who have lived here. Take

a look at the album and give suggestions of things to pursue or include. If any of you out there are avid scrapbookers let me know. I could use help with the design

and layout. Questions? Call Jan at 512-8838 Mon. - Thur from 1-5.



Thank you for your support of THS. Your membership is important to us. If you like what you see, pass this newsletter on and encourage others to join. To support THS and the preservation of history in our area call 541-512-8838 or stop by 206 E. Main St. in Talent.

# Government Camp on the Barlow Road

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Government Camp began in 1849. This was when the first U.S. regiment of Mounted Riflemen crossed the plains into Oregon country arriving at the Dalles. Most of the troops and their equipment were transported downriver to Vancouver, Washington by boat. The remaining troops expected to follow when boats became available. Plans changed, however, and the troops were ordered to proceed to Oregon City by the Oregon Trail. Bogged down by mud and snow, with half of the livestock lost or dead and soldiers near total exhaustion, Lt. David Frost abandoned 45 Cavalry wagons in October, 1849, before starting down Laurel Hill. Their noted presence beside the Barlow Road became the namesake of the alpine village - Government Camp. The Barlow Road allowed thousands of Oregon Trail emigrants to travel overland to the Willamette Valley rather than risk floating the dangerous Columbia River. The route skirted today's Ranger Station, located just across Highway 26, and passed within feet of this location. Travelers went on through what is now the village of Government Camp, proceeding west toward the infamous Laurel Hill. Located two miles west of Government Camp, the challenging Laurel Hill descent earned a reputation among pioneers as a troublesome part of the Oregon Trail.

Emigrants had to lower wagons down a series of steep rocky chutes from ropes snubbed to trees, or drag big logs behind them in hopes they wouldn't careen down the ravines. "Come to Laurel Hill. This is the worst hill on the road from the states to Oregon..."

Diary of Absalom Harden, 1847.



Another photo donation from a local person. This one shows George Kerby on his Talent Ranch on Wagner Creek.

## HISTORIC DISCOVERY DRIVES

A number of years ago, the Southern Oregon Historical Society created a guide to historic sites in Jackson County. This guide has never lost its popularity and whether you are going toward Prospect or the Applegate, Tubb Springs to Evans Valley this pamphlet will tickle your curiosity about the history of the Rogue Valley. It locates twenty seven interesting sites in this area. Directions and historic tidbits are included in the pamphlet - all places can be enjoyed in a single day or afternoon. For your copy, stop by the THS office or pick one up at any of the Southern Oregon Historical museums. Stearns cemetery located on Anderson Creek Road is the Talent site featured in the pamphlet. Enjoy your summer and take in history while you are at it.

# Lewis & Clark

The Louisiana Purchase was secured by President Thomas Jefferson from France for three cents an acre. In May 1804 the Lewis and Clark Expedition, eagerly promoted by the president, left St. Louis, now in the state of Missouri, for the West Coast of the North American continent. Meriwether Lewis, a personal aide to Jefferson, and from a Virginia family long associated with the Jeffersons, particularly in the land speculations of the Loyal Land Company, was one of the leaders of the party that started up the Missouri with a 55 foot keel boat and two pirogues, hollowed log canoes. The other leader was fellow Army officer William Clark.

The Missouri River, the main tributary of the mighty Mississippi, is now and was then, longer than 2300 miles, draining one-sixth of what is now the United States. It is a big river. Just above St. Louis the forested banks of the Missouri are limestone bluffs, and today, like then, the river is filled with dangerous currents. The Expedition actually left from St. Charles, Missouri, a settlement in 1804 of some 450 people, mostly French and mostly poor. Today there are few boats on the Missouri, no barges, and as one writer put it: "no evidence that the Missouri used to be one of the great waterways of the world." A great waterway even though its snag-filled, swift-moving brown water was dangerous and treacherous. The river used to wander after every spring flood, but has been channeled and confined. In so doing, it is estimated that some 500,000—half a million acres—of swampy marshland, which supported a myriad of animal species has been changed into farmland, but in 1804 those swampy acres were still lush habitat. The river still tries to meander, but the churning water of the past can now only be seen in a few places.

As the Expedition moved upriver into what today is the northwest corner of Missouri, and into present Nebraska, the land as the Expedition's journals point out "the sky itself seems to open and swallow people." Trees become rare, and the land flattens. By the river there are bald hills, and in 1804, without Caucasian inhabitants, for two-thirds

of the population of the United States lived within 50 miles of the Atlantic Coast. The explorers thought it would take a thousand years for the area to become populated by settlers. Even in 1820, one military man assessed the area this way: "It is wholly unfit for cultivation and of course uninhabitable by people depending upon agriculture for their subsistence." He was wrong for by 1890 there were so many settlers that the U. S. Census for that year declared, "There can hardly be said to be a frontier line."

Interestingly enough, the 19th century definition of "frontier" meant less than six people per square mile, and today due to population decline in the Great Plains, an area at least as large as the Louisiana Purchase now meets that definition—an interesting 21st century development. The United States has an empty middle.

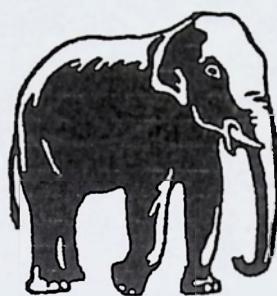


## Gold Coin Donated to Portland Lewis and Clark Exposition

A hundred years ago, to commemorate the Lewis & Clark Voyage of Discovery, Portland held a Lewis & Clark Exposition to mark the centennial of that historic exploration. Besides, the normal trappings of a civic exposition, a gold coin was minted which could be bought as a keepsake by exposition attendees. Recently, an anonymous donor from Des Moines, Iowa, contributed one of the rare coins to the Nature Conservancy. Today's price for the coin which cost \$2.00 a hundred years ago: \$5,500.

## EDITORIAL

Our board president, John Morrison, is running for mayor of Ashland. We are using this space in the newsletter to wish John luck. Actually, the people of Ashland will be the lucky ones if they choose him. He has demonstrated good leadership skills and a thorough knowledge of the issues. We appreciate his service on the board at Talent Historical Society and would like to turn the tables and assist him in his quest for new responsibilities.



VOTE!!!



Please call the office and give us your email address or email us at [talenthistory@jeffnet.org](mailto:talenthistory@jeffnet.org)  
Having your address will help us contact you more quickly and efficiently than snail mail.

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